

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
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R 180640Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
TO SCSTATE WASHDC 7128
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
DIA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

C O N F I D E N T I A L NDJAMENA 1926

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, PINS, CD
SUBJC: SITUATION IN CHAD

SUMMARY: MALLOUM DEPARTS FRO PARIS, AFTER HAVING
BEEN COUNSELLED BY FRENCH: (A) TO AVOID DRASTIC ACTION
IN RESPONSE TO REBEL BREACH OF CEASE FIRE AND (B) TO
CHANGE COMPOSITION AND FORM OF PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENTS.
EXISTENCE OF MAJOR LIBYAN COLUMN MOVING INTO CHAD STILL
IN QUESTION.

1. PRESIDENT MALLOUM LEAVES NDJAMENA MORNING
OF MAY 18 FOR A MEDICAL CHECK-UP IN SWITZERLNAD PRIOR
TO ATTENDING THE FRANCO-AFRICAN CHIEF OF STATE
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MEETING IN PARIS. ACCORDING TO FRENCH AMBASSADOR,
THE FRENCH HAVE BEEN COUNSELLING MALLOUM NOT TO
TAKE ANY DRASTIC ACTION IN RESPONSE TO THE REBEL
DENUNCIATION OF CEASE FIRE. THEY BELIEVE MALLOUM
CAN STRENGTHEN HIS POSITION BY CONTINUING TO APPEAR
REASONABLE AND MODERATE, LEAVING TO THE REBELS
AND LIBYA THE ROLE OF TROUBLEMAKERS. MALLOUM

HAS NOT YET DECIDED WHETHER TO ACCEPT THIS ADVICE
OR TO PUBLICLY DECLARE CEASE FIRE NULL AND VOID AND
TAKE MATTER TO OAU OR UN.

2. FRENCH HAVE ALSO BEEN TRYING TO PERSUADE
MALLOUM TO CHANGE COMPOSITION AND FORM OF PRESENT
PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT. MALLOUM HAS AGREED THAT
THERE SHOULD BE MORE CIVILIAN AND MORE NORTHERN
MEMBERS IN THE GOVERNMENT. TO THIS END, HE SEEMS
PREPARED TO HAVE MINISTERS GOUARA LASSOU,
MAHAMOUND, ZAKARIA, AND KOTIGA RESUME PURELY
MILITARY DUTIES. THIS WOULD LEAVE ONLY MALLOUM,
DJIME, KAMOUGUE, AND DJOGO IN THE GOVERNMENT. HE
IS APPARENTLY ALSO IN AGREEMENT WITH INCLUSION
OF HISEN HABRE, ABBA SIDDICK, THE SULTANS OF OUADDAI
AND MAO, AND THEIR FORMER TOMBALBAYE MINISTERS
LAMANA AND NDJIGANBAYE IN GOVERNMENT. OTHERS
ARE STILL UNDER DISCUSSION. ON THE QUESTION OF A
MORE FEDERAL FORM OF GOVERNMENT WITH LOCAL
AUTONOMY, MALLOUM REMAINS OPPOSED AS HE FEELS
IT WOULD FURTHER SHATTER THE FRAGILE NATIONAL UNITY
HE HAS BEEN SEEKING.

3. RUMORS CONCERNING MAJOR LIBYAN MILITARY COLUMN
MOVING SOUTH INTO CHAD PERSIST. THESE RUMORS, SOME OF
WHICH PUT COLUMN AT 1500 LIBYAN TROOPS WITH EQUIPMENT,
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HAVE BEEN RECENTLY REPORTED ON EUROPEAN
RADIO BROADCASTS AS WELL AS VOA. FRENCH AMBASSADOR
HAS INFORMED ME THAT AS OF MAY 16, THERE HAD BEEN
NO VISUAL SIGHTINGS OF SUCH A COLUMN, ALTHOUGH HE
COULD NOT RULE OUT ITS POSSIBLE EXISTENCE. BOTH FRENCH
RECONNAISSANCE PLANES LEFT NDJAMENA EARLY THIS
MORNING AND ARE ASSUMED SCORING THE NORTH FOR
COLUMN. BRADFORD

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